

# LEAF BLIGHT OF GRAPE IN FLORIDA

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Grape culture in Florida had its beginnings with the early Spanish explorers who introduced the European wine grape, *Vitis vinifera* L. Plantings were made along the eastern coast and the Keys in an effort to establish a wine industry. The unique Florida climate is an all-important factor in the measure of progress made toward the development of new grape varieties and the many attendant diseases which accompany their culture (2).

Leaf blight is one of the relatively minor diseases of grape. It is most prevalent in the southeastern states. The disease usually becomes most abundant just after midsummer and occurs on both wild and cultivated grapes. The causal fungus is Isariopsis clavispora (B & C) Sacc.

SYMPTOMS. Leaf blight of grape is characterized by the presence of rather dark brown, angular leaf spots with a slight yellow halo, which later become dry, brittle and black on both leaf surfaces and can be up to one quarter of an inch in diameter. The leaf spots generally occur first on the shaded, lower leaves. They become numerous and severe in damp situations or during wet seasons, leading to

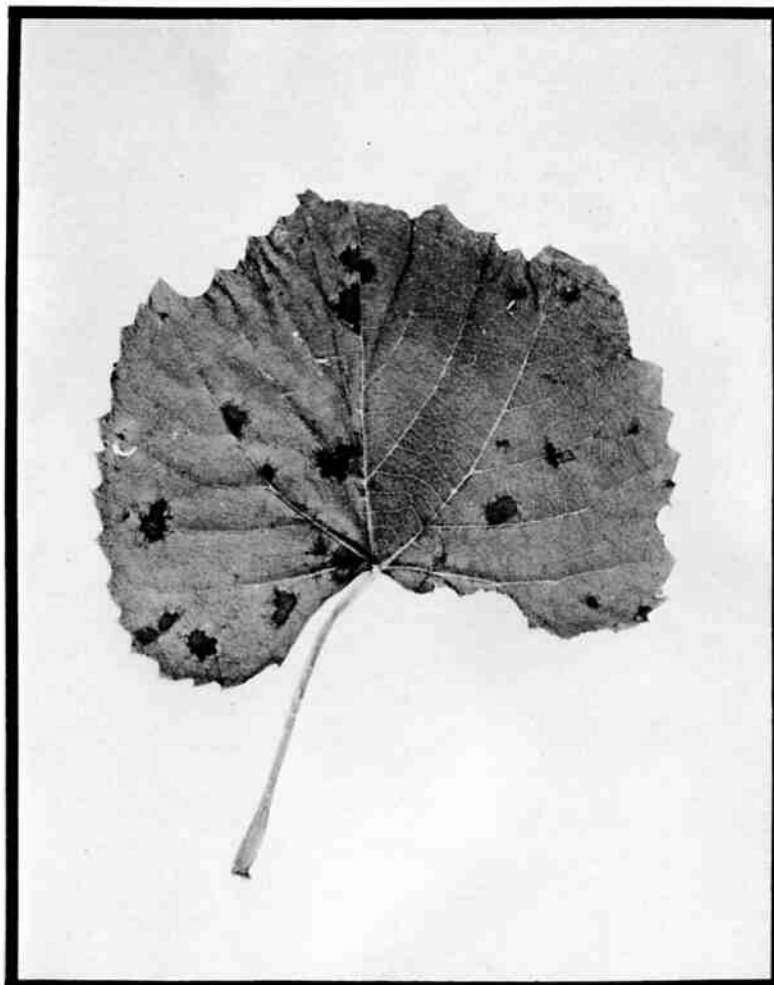


Fig. 1. Leaf blight of grape.

defoliation and injury to the vine. The fungus can be seen on the lower leaf surface with the aid of hand lens as hairlike projections, which are the fruiting structures upon which the fungus spores are produced. The pathogen can be spread to adjacent healthy leaves via splashing rains or even possibly by winds. It undoubtedly overwinters on infected fallen leaves (2).

CONTROL. The gathering up and removal of infected fallen leaves will reduce the amount of the fungus present. Spraying with a maneb fungicide (Manzate D, Dithane M-45 or Dithane M-22) at 1 1/2 pounds per 100 gallons of water is recommended for effective disease control (1).

#### Literature Cited

1. Mortensen, J. A., W. C. Adlerz and C. P. Belardi. 1968. 30 questions and answers for grape growers. Florida Agr. Ext. Serv. Circ. 327. 12 p.
2. Rhoads, A. S. 1926. Diseases of grapes in Florida. Florida Agr. Sta. Bull. 178. 156 p.